

**MINUTES OF THE  
AUBURN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
July 20, 2010**

The regular session of the Auburn City Planning Commission was called to order on July 20, 2010 at 6:05 p.m. by Chairman Spokely in the Council Chambers, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn, California.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Snyder, Worthington, Vitas, and Spokely

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Young

**STAFF PRESENT:** Will Wong, Community Development Director  
Reg Murray, Senior Planner  
Lance E. Lowe, AICP, Associate Planner  
Carie Huff, P.E., Associate Engineer

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLIGIENCE**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

June 1, 2010

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**V. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

- A. USE PERMIT, DESIGN REVIEW AND TREE PERMITS – 155 PINE STREET (ST. JOSEPH’S ASSEMBLY HALL) – FILE UP 09-02; DRP 09-04; & TP 09-05.** The applicant requests a Use Permit, Design Review and Tree Permit for the existing St. Joseph’s Church and proposed expansion and related facilities, including a proposed 5,280 square foot assembly building. The Design Review Permit addresses site design and building architecture associated with the construction of the 5,280 square foot assembly building, parking lot and relating improvements. A Tree Permit is required for the removal of seven (7) native trees.

Planner Lowe gave his staff report, reviewing the project site and summarizing the applicant’s proposal for the Design Review Permit and Tree Permit.

Planner Lowe discussed the architecture of the building and trees that are proposed to be removed.

Commissioner Worthington asked about the street section along Pine Street and the driveway access for this property of 28 feet.

Planner Lowe referred to the traffic study that has been prepared and the 28 feet access.

Commissioner Worthington asked about the lot line adjustment/merger and addressing. Should the address be labeled Lincoln Way and are there issues with respect to access on Lincoln Way?

Planner Lowe noted that the building fronts on Pine Street and therefore should have a Pine Street address. There are no access issues along Lincoln Way.

Commissioner Worthington asked about the Historic District boundaries.

Planner Lowe described the Historic District boundaries.

Commissioner Spokely asked if the merger of properties have any bearing on the Historic District boundaries?

Planner Lowe replied that no they are separate issues. The Historic District boundary will not change because they are merging properties.

Commissioner Worthington noted that the Historic Boundaries should be amended to reflect the lot merger.

Commissioner Worthington appreciates the comments provided by staff to add architectural details.

Commissioner Worthington asked about the on-site drainage.

Commissioner Worthington asked about the trees that will be removed and what will replace the trees.

Planner Lowe showed the location of the trees and improvements consisting of parking landscaping that will replace them.

Commissioner Spokely asked about the traffic study and traffic volumes anticipated if both uses were to be occupied at the same time.

Commission Spokely noted that we have no way of limiting both uses from occurring at the same time.

Planner Lowe replied that staff did not believe it necessary to condition the project so that both uses would not occur at the same time. Other than typical church functions that may require use of the assembly hall, it is anticipated that the church and assembly hall would operate at different times. For example, if the church were to have a service, it did not seem practical that the church would rent the other building out for a wedding or some other function at the same time and vice versa.

Commissioner Spokely noted the proximity of the driveway to the intersection on Lincoln Way and Hwy 49. Does the proposed new assembly building require the use of existing parking?

Planner Lowe noted that the new building will need to utilize the existing parking due to the lack of new parking proposed.

Commissioner Spokely asked about the building aesthetic and staff discussions with the applicant. Commissioner Spokely noted that there are some architectural treatments that spruce up the building, but it is largely a pre-fabricated metal building.

Planner Lowe replied that staff had concerns regarding the architecture of the building and the applicant should either provide architectural details reflecting the church or architectural details reflecting the Pine Street neighborhood.

The applicant responded by adding natural materials and trellis work to the elevations facing the street.

Staff does have a concern regarding the architecture.

Commissioner Spokely noted that the southern elevation seems to have the bulk of the architectural treatments along the east elevation. Was there any discussion with the applicant to add further architectural treatments to the east elevation?

Planner Lowe replied that staff did not have further discussions to require more architectural elements, but required that the planter strip fronting Pine Street be widened to eight feet and be planted with trees and shrubs to conceal some of the views from the Pine Street neighborhood.

Commissioner Vitas commented that when the parking lot is entirely full and the outflow of traffic will occur in Pine Street. Was there any thought to paint the roadway on Pine Street red to eliminate parking on Pine Street.

Planner Lowe noted that Pine Street is a 26 foot street with parking on one side of the street. Segments of Pine Street are painted and have no parking signage.

The Traffic Engineer recommended that red curb painting be completed along Pine Street. Staff would also recommend that parking directory signage be installed at the entrance to direct people to the parking on-site.

Commissioner Worthington asked about internal circulation for between cars and pedestrians and would like to have the Architect or Engineer further discuss the internal circulation patterns.

Chairman Spokely opened the public hearing.

Kevin Letcher 2701 Newcastle Road addressed the commission.

Mr. Letcher noted that several concessions have been made to preserve trees on-site and a number of trees will be planted where, because of site design, trees will be required to be removed.

Mr. Letcher noted that there are 4 parcels and they will all be merged into one parcel.

Mr. Letcher noted that trellises were added to the most visible sides of the building. There will also be fencing around the perimeter of the property to conceal views from the public way.

Mr. Letcher also noted that the building has been moved back from Pine Street and is proposed at 60 feet from Pine Street and will be separated with a 8 foot planter strip.

Mr. Letcher noted that the detention area will be designed as a vegetated bio-swale.

Mr. Letcher noted that there is currently a lighted pedestrian path from the existing church to the new assembly building.

Commissioner Worthington asked if those will be extended to the new building.

Mr. Letcher noted that you would be required to walk across the parking lot for the last 60 feet but the existing sidewalks already connect the existing buildings with the proposed building.

Commissioner Worthington asked if that was an existing improved walkway?

Mr. Letcher noted that the walkways are paved and are existing.

Mr. Letcher further noted that the Pine Street improvements will include curb, gutter and sidewalk. The church will also provide an overlay along Pine Street.

Commissioner Snyder asked about the treatments to the end of the building and asked what type of material it will be.

Mr. Letcher noted that the trellises will be constructed of wood.

Commissioner Spokely noted that the east elevation will be architecturally sensitive.

Commissioner Worthington asked about the feasibility of adding a double gable to the east elevation.

Mr. Letcher noted that the design team looked into a double gable, but opted for stonework and a trellis to break up the wall.

Commissioner Snyder appreciated the willingness of the church to provide additional architectural embellishments.

Jim Letcher 2701 Newcastle Road addressed the commission.

Mr. Letcher noted that the church has provided architectural elevations that match buildings in the neighborhood.

Alva Miller of 420 Landis Circle, president of the Elk Lodge, raised a concern with parking along Pine Street. The Elks Lodge does have events which exceed the parking capacity for their site and members often park along Pine Street.

Dean Wood of 536 Dairy Road supports the project which he believes will be an asset to the Auburn Community.

Joe Nicosia of 119 Rancho Circle addressed the commission.

Mr. Nicosia commented that the hall has been a long awaited and need amenity for the church. The City of Auburn is in need of a facility to accommodate events.

Mr. Nicosia noted that the contractor has worked with the City for over a year and has complied with the requirements of the City.

Mr. Nicosia hopes that the commission approves the project.

Father Brian of 1162 Lincoln Way addressed the commission and discussed the need for the facility. Father Brian noted that he would be responsible for booking events at the assembly building and noted that events would seldom occur at both facilities at the same time.

Commissioner Spokely asked how many members are in the parish?

Father Brian replied that there are 850 families.

Commissioner Spokely asked how many people come to a service?

Father Brian noted that there are 150 to 200 people that come to the services.

Commissioner Worthington asked about the sizing of the reception hall, which will serve an estimated 250 people.

Mr. Letcher noted that typically there are 160 to 200 people and the church is growing.

Commissioner Spokely asked the applicant to respond to the comments on the east side of the building. Would he be agreeable to enhancements to the east façade?

Mr. Letcher noted that we would be agreeable to additional enhancements to the east elevation.

Commissioner Spokely closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Snyder appreciates the facility which is much needed; however, Commissioner Snyder noted that he would like to see additional enhancements to the east elevation and he should work with staff.

Chairman Spokely noted that the community is in need to additional meeting places, but would like to see additional treatments to the east façade.

Chairman Spokely noted that additional landscaping could be added next to the building and the architectural treatments.

Commissioner Worthington **MOVED** approve the project with the additional condition that the applicant work with staff to provide additional architectural details on the east elevation.

Commissioner Vitas **SECONDED** the motion.

|          |                                      |
|----------|--------------------------------------|
| AYES:    | Snyder, Vitas, Worthington & Spokely |
| NOES:    | None                                 |
| ABSTAIN: | None                                 |
| ABSENT:  | Young                                |

- B. LOT SPLIT, DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT, USE PERMIT, AND TREE PERMIT – 585 SACRAMENTO STREET (MERCY AUBURN SENIOR APARTMENTS) – FILE LS 10-1; DRP 10-1; UP 10-1; TP 10-1.** The applicant requests approval of a Lot Split, Design Review Permit, Use Permit, and Tree Permit for the Mercy Auburn Senior Apartment project located at 585 Sacramento Street. The Lot Split will subdivide the 33.8 acre site to create a 2.9 acre lot for the apartment project and a 30.9 acre lot for the existing Sisters of Mercy campus. The Design Review Permit addresses site design and building architecture associated with the construction of a ±19,500 square foot, three-story apartment building with sixty (60) units. The Use Permit permits a density bonus of forty-eight (48) units and authorizes a planned unit development to allow multi-family units in the single-family zone district with deviations to the City's standards for building height and parking. The Tree Permit is required to address the removal of one (1) native tree.

Planner Murray gave his staff report, reviewing the project site and summarizing the applicant's proposal for the Lot Split, the Design Review Permit, Use Permit, and Tree Permit. Planner Murray noted that the Community Development Department received a letter from the public (Wilson Voorhees) regarding the proposed project after the Commission packet was sent out and that the letter had been provided to the Commissioners at this evening's meeting. Planner Murray noted that since the project included a density bonus and the applicant was requesting funding

participation from the City, the Commission's action on the project would serve as a recommendation to the City Council.

Chairman Spokely asked if the Commission had questions for staff.

Commissioner Worthington inquired whether staff had received any comments from the public other than the letter received from Mr. Voorhees.

Planner Murray indicated that he had received one phone call from a lady who had received the public notice and who indicated her general support of the project.

Commissioner Worthington noted that the applicant held a meeting with neighbors one week prior to the Commission hearing and asked if staff had attended the meeting.

Planner Murray replied that staff did not participate in the neighborhood meeting.

Commissioner Worthington asked for clarification about the requirement of a transit shelter on Sacramento Street.

Planner Murray stated that the City is requiring a transit shelter on Sacramento Street, but that the exact location isn't known at this time. The location would be determined in coordination between the applicant and the Public Works Department as part of the project's improvement plans.

Commissioner Worthington asked if the City's requirement for the transit shelter had anything to do with the applicant's requested parking reduction from 2 spaces per unit down to 1 space per unit.

Planner Murray indicated that there was no connection between the transit shelter and the requested reduction in parking and that the City would have required the shelter even if the project complied with the City's parking standards.

Commissioner Worthington asked if any substantiation had been provided for the requested parking reduction.

Planner Murray noted that Attachment 4 of the staff report was a letter from the applicant addressing the parking needs for the project and surveys of other similar projects.

Commissioner Worthington questioned if the parking reduction would set any type of precedent.

Planner Murray commented that the City approved a similar parking reduction for the Volunteers of America senior apartment project several years ago.

Commissioner Worthington asked if staff had any concerns about age restriction and the possible number of persons per unit as it relates to parking requirements.

Planner Murray stated that they did not as the developer was required to enter into an affordable housing agreement with the city.

Commissioner Worthington questioned what funding was being provided for the project.

Commissioner Snyder commented that the nature of project funding was not germane to the Planning Commission's consideration of the project.

Commissioner Worthington noted that concerns had been expressed to her from the public relating to funding for the project and how that might affect the long-term maintenance of the facility.

Commissioner Snyder reiterated his thought that the funding issue was not germane to the Commission's review.

Commissioner Worthington asked if funding information was available in the project file.

Planner Murray noted that Attachment 2 of the staff report summarized the applicant's anticipated funding of the project and that the City does not require that a project be fully funded to receive City funding.

Commissioner Snyder reiterated his thought that the funding issue was not germane to the Commission's review.

Commissioner Worthington commented that the issue had been asked of her by a neighbor of the project.

Commissioner Spokely noted that funding issues are not in the Commission's purview and ask if Commissioner Worthington had any additional questions.

Commissioner Worthington asked for clarification regarding the transfer of right-of-way for this project.

Planner Murray reviewed the right-of-way dedication requirements of the project.

Commissioner Worthington asked for clarification about the requirement for frontage improvements and the City's maintenance responsibility for those improvements.

Planner Murray reviewed the frontage improvements required of the project and that the City is already maintaining existing improvements in the area.

Chair Spokely asked about the traffic study prepared for the project and whether mention was made in the study of the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan (BRSP).



Planner Murray indicated that the BRSP was considered in the traffic study.

Chair Spokely noted that traffic counts in the traffic study were from 2007 and questioned the justification for those older counts.

Planner Murray noted that the trip rates for a senior apartment project are considerably less than a non-senior apartment project and therefore this project's impacts on surrounding streets would be negligible.

Chair Spokely asked about the age restriction for the Mercy project and if this is a senior care facility.

Planner Murray confirmed that the Mercy project is an apartment project, not a senior care facility.

Chair Spokely questioned the potential maintenance impacts on the City's roads due to the project.

Planner Murray commented that persons residing at a senior affordable project are typically less likely to own a vehicle, therefore, it's anticipated that the project would generate fewer vehicle trips and require less road maintenance.

Chair Spokely asked for clarification about the existing sewer line on the Sister's property, the sewer connection for this project, and the capacity of the existing line.

Engineer Huff reviewed the existing sewer improvements on the property as well as the requirements of the proposed project, and confirmed that adequate capacity is available to accommodate the new project.

Chair Spokely asked about site drainage and water quality.

Planner Murray confirmed that the project is required to comply with the City's standards relating to drainage and water quality through the standard conditions of that have been applied to this project.

Chair Spokely questioned the massing and scale of the proposed 3-story building. Why, with the amount of available land on the Sister's campus, was a 3-story building being proposed on a smaller lot instead of proposing a lower-profile building that might be more in context with the surrounding community.

Planner Murray noted that the applicant could respond to the question.

Chair Spokely opened the public hearing and asked the applicant to come forward.

The applicant, Rich Ciraulo, Mercy Housing California, 3181 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento, California, addressed the Commission. Mr. Ciraulo provided a presentation to the Commission including a review of the existing property and the Sister's future thoughts for the property. Mr. Ciraulo also gave an overview of his

company - Mercy Housing, similar projects that they have developed in other communities, target residents, methods of funding, the proposed Auburn facility, and services offered for residents.

Architect Chris Lamén; 869 4th Street, San Rafael, California addressed the Commission. Mr. Lamén reviewed the project including design, security, circulation, ADA accessibility, community facilities in the building. Mr. Lamén also commented on the massing and scale of the building being a function of several things, including the type of tenants, the nature of services provided, compatibility with the existing Sisters of Mercy facility, and considerable distance away from existing residences.

Commissioner Worthington requested additional detail about the proposed architecture and its fit with the buildings on the Sisters complex and residences to the east.

Commissioner Snyder noted that the homes to the east of the site can't be seen due to the hill and trees in the area.

Architect Lamén commented that the building should only be visible from the existing Sisters campus due to the hill, trees, and shallow slope of the roof. He characterized the architectural style as California classic mission with a Spanish Mediterranean motif and some additional architectural detailing.

Commissioner Worthington requested clarification about ownership and operation of the apartments

Mr. Ciraulo noted that Mercy Housing will be constructing the project and own and manage the apartments, while the Sisters of Mercy will continue to own the land.

Chair Spokely asked what mechanism will be put in place to insure that the age and income restrictions are maintained on the project.

Mr. Ciraulo commented that regulations will be recorded on the property memorializing the funding for, and income levels of, the target tenants of the facility.

Commissioner Vitas asked what the term of the surety would be.

Director Wong noted that there are variable terms associated with the different funding sources, with terms from 55 to 85 years.

Chair Spokely requested clarification that there are multiple methods to insure that the project will maintain its status related to age restriction and affordability.

Director Wong confirmed that there are multiple methods to insure the age restriction and affordability components of the project.

Commissioner Snyder confirmed the same.

Commissioner Spokely asked why a separate parcel was required for the project.

Mr. Ciraulo commented that their funding sources require that the project be situated on a separate parcel.

Commissioner Snyder complimented the applicant on the detail and quality of the architecture proposed for the facility.

Commissioner Worthington seconded Commissioner Snyder's comments.

Chair Spokely asked about the neighbors meeting that Mercy Housing held with members of the community.

Mr. Ciraulo summarized the meeting and comments received from the neighbors.

Mr. Leman noted that one comment received at the meeting had to do with what impact the project would have on the City's tax base. He noted that tenants are likely to come from the existing community and that their company manages their projects well.

Chair Spokely asked if anyone from the public wished to speak.

Wilson Voorhees, 2045 Ross Drive, Auburn, California. Mr. Voorhees indicated that he owns a home at 505 Adrianna Place to the north of the Sisters of Mercy property. He stated that he hasn't made up his mind about the project, but that he had questions about the low-income housing and whether it would result in additional impacts on the Auburn Police department. He also questioned if the development would be required to pay its sewer fees as a non-profit development. He expressed concerns about how the project is going to affect the surrounding single-family areas, specifically the construction impacts from the project and the potential impact of an affordable project on property values in the area.

Sara Ann Ough, 1380 Pajaro Court, Auburn, California. Ms. Ough commented that the zoning for the property is single-family residential and didn't anticipate a high-rise development. She also expressed concern about the density of the development, what could happen on the rest of the property, and traffic in the area.

Joseph Tucciarone, 14670 McElroy Road, Auburn, California. Mr. Tucciarone commented that he supports the project and the necessary concessions regarding building height and parking, because the community needs affordable senior housing.

Greg Sparks, 233 Pharoah Avenue, Davis, California, Regional Director for Mercy Housing California. Mr. Sparks spoke to the issue of the future use of the Sisters property, noting the Sisters interest in maintaining a contemplative setting, and not

single-family homes, on the remainder of the property. Mr. Sparks also addressed prior concerns about what impact the project would have on the community, noting that the Sisters property was initially developed without neighbors but that the community has developed around their campus over time. He also stated that the project won't attract crime, that their tenants aren't criminals, and that the facility has its own security against crime.

Commissioner Snyder asked Mr. Sparks what fees or taxes the project may be exempt from.

Mr. Sparks noted that the project would be required to pay all impact development fees, and that the property taxes are generally waived for their project since they are a non-profit.

Commissioner Worthington questioned why the parcel size is as small as it is.

Mr. Sparks commented that the smaller lot size reduces their maintenance costs. In addition, the Sisters of Mercy wanted to maintain control of the maintenance of their existing property.

Chair Spokely asked if a smaller facility would work on this site.

Mr. Ciraulo commented that based on construction and operating costs, their experience has shown that projects of this size work well.

Chair Spokely asked if the BRSP had been contemplated in the project's traffic analysis.

Planner Murray confirmed that the BRSP had been contemplated in the analysis for this project.

Commissioner Worthington asked for confirmation that the potential traffic impacts from the project appear to be negligible at the intersection for Auburn Folsom & Sacramento Street.

Planner Murray confirmed that that was the conclusion of the traffic report.

Chair Spokely closed the public hearing.

Chair Spokely commented that he recognizes the need for this type of project, but that he felt that the project is too big for this particular site and for this part of Auburn.

Commissioner Snyder commented that the development is proposed with a density of 20-units per acre, and that this location and use is appropriate for this development.

Commissioner Worthington MOVED to recommend that City Council approve the project as presented.

Commissioner Vitas SECONDED the motion.

AYES: Snyder, Vitas, Worthington  
NOES: Spokely  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT: Young

## **VI. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT FOLLOW-UP REPORTS**

- A. City Council Meetings
- B. Future Planning Commission Meetings  
Director Wong informed the Commission to expect hearings on both standard dates in August.
- C. Reports  
None

## **VII. PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS**

The purpose of these reports is to provide a forum for Planning Commissioners to bring forth their own ideas to the Commission. No decisions are to be made on these issues. If a Commissioner would like formal action on any of these discussed items, it will be placed on a future Commission agenda.

None

## **VIII. FUTURE PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEMS**

Planning Commissioners will discuss and agree on items and/or projects to be placed on future Commission agendas for the purpose of updating the Commission on the progress of items and/or projects.

None

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reg Murray